ISSN 0712-7774

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM presents

CEREBUS

43
OCT

$1.50

A Note from the Publisher

This week, as Dave and I were on our final preparations for the tour, we heard some sad news. Gene Day had died. He died, at age 31, of a heart attack.

The news made us stop and think. How many times had we said, "I've got to slow down my pace of living."?

Gene's death made us sit down and discuss living and dying. One affects the other, and it is pretty easy to just let the whole question of your own death slide past you.

Since that day we have spent quite a few hours talking about it. The realities of what happens if you are the one left behind. It seems ghoulish to talk about funerals and death at our age, but then Gene was the same age as me. The point is, there is no guarantee that all your goals will be met before death comes. Dave and I both agreed that it is unlikely we will ever find a "right" time to die. There is always some project that you wanted to start. Or to finish.

Maybe now is the time to face the realities of death. No one is ever totally prepared for it, but if there is one certainty to life, it is this. Death, when it comes, will catch you unaware.

I didn't know Gene too well. To me he was this big, laughing, hardworking fellow artist friend of Dave's.

When I first met Dave, every other sentence had Gene in it. I wondered, at the time, if Dave should marry me or Gene. All the jealousies fell when I met Gene. I couldn't help but like him.

We had been looking forward to seeing him at a party in Toronto in November, when we got back from the tour. It seems hard to believe he won't be there.

Deni

CEREBUS

VOL. 1 NO. 43 OCTOBER 1982

Publisher
Deni Sim

Distributors:
Bud Plant Inc.
P.O. Box 1886
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Pacific Comics
P.O. Box 99217
San Diego, CA 92109

Glenwood Distribution
124 Vandalia St.
Collinsville, IL 62234

Capital City Distributors
2827 Perry Street
Madison, WI 53713

Diamond Comics
Distributors Inc.
1720 Belmont Ave.
Bay B - 2
Baltimore, MD 21207

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Box 3791, Stn. B
Winnipeg, Man., Canada
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Now & Then Books
103 Queen St. South
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
N2G 1W1

Andromeda Publications
323 Queen St. W.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5V 2A4

Titan Distributors
P.O. Box 250
London, E3 4RT England

Cerebus Fan Club
c/o Fred Patten
11863 West Jefferson Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90230
Membership . . . $8.00 per year

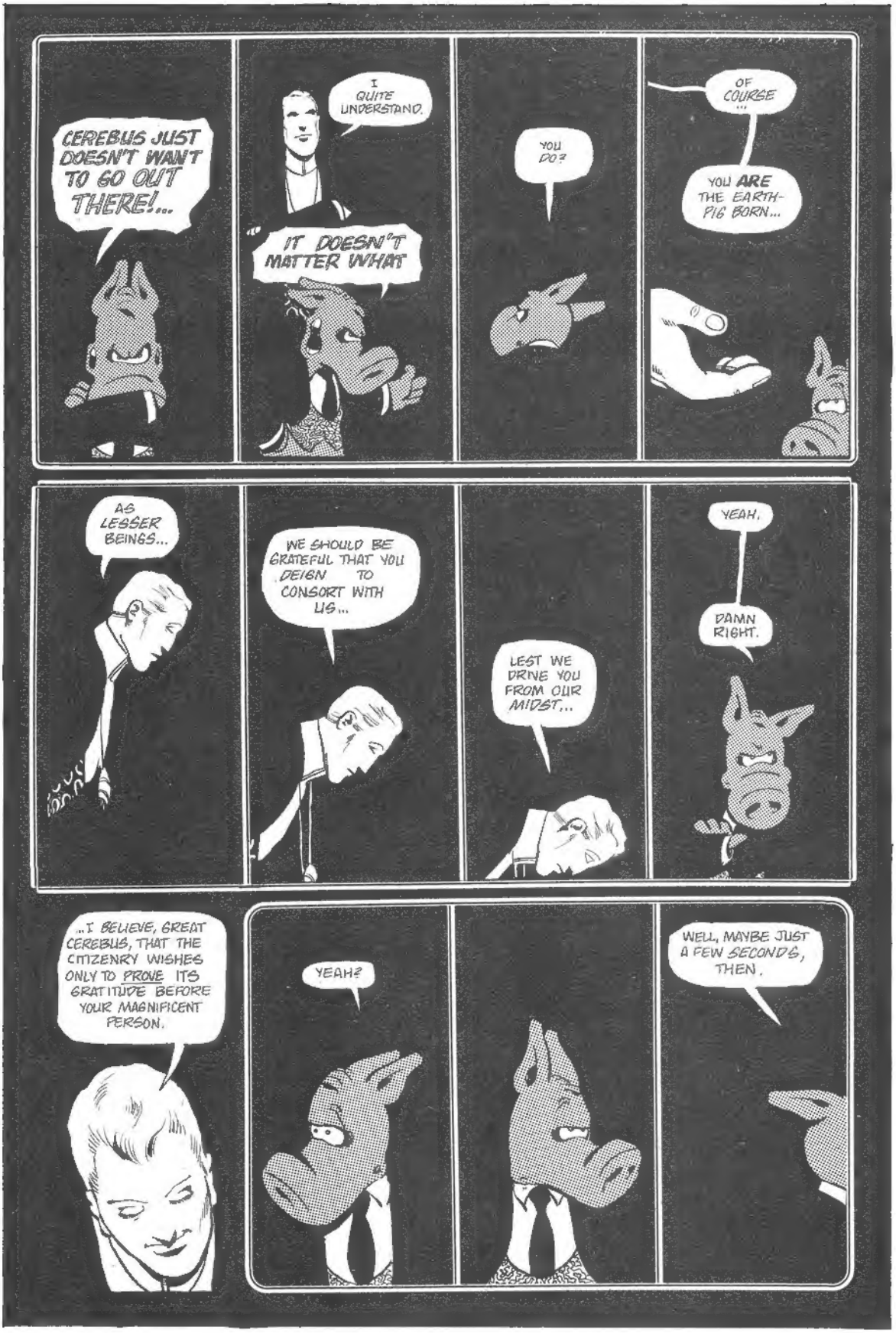
Advertising (design)
Abraxas Studio
Richard Bruning
P.O. Box 1606
Madison, WI 53701

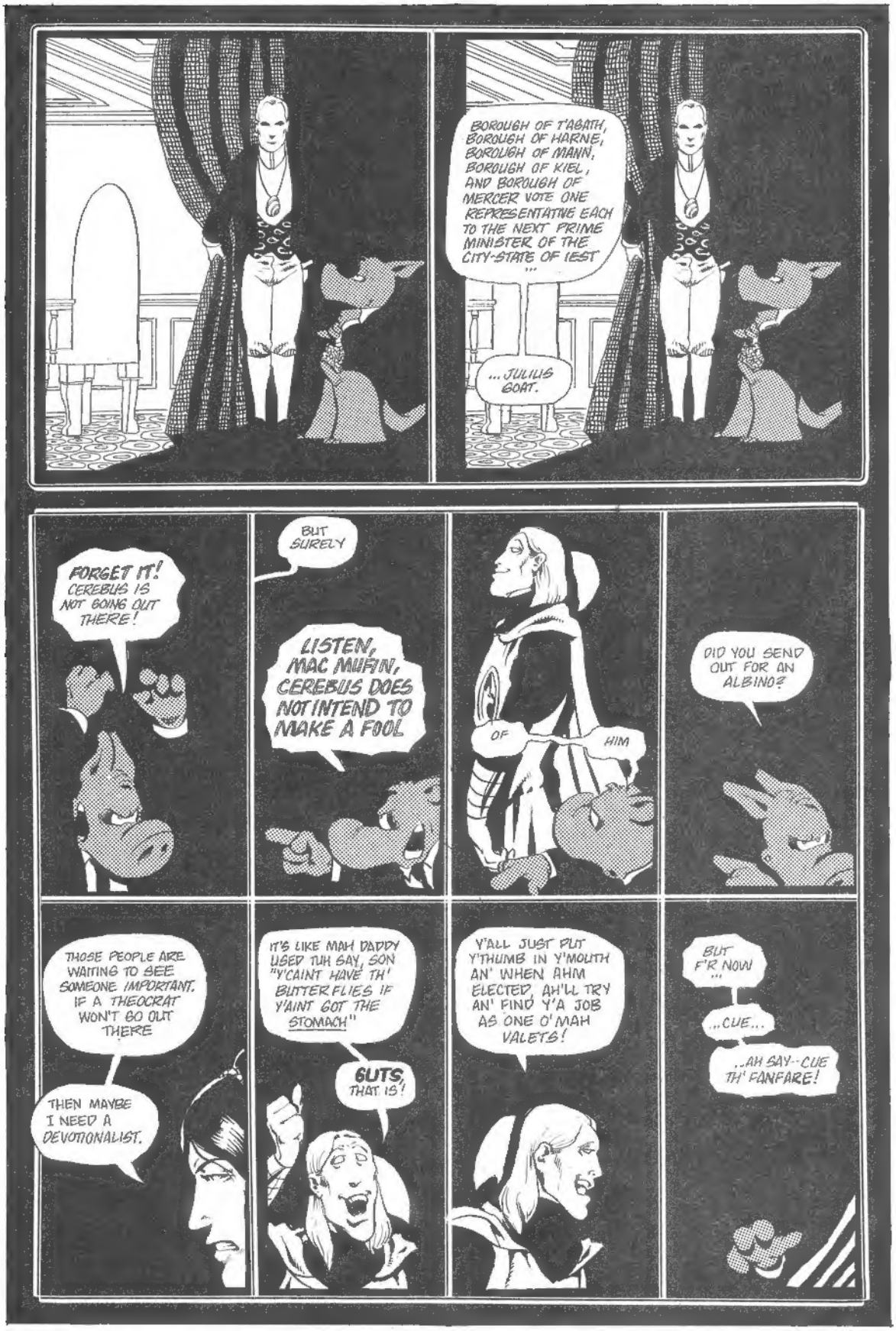
CEREBUS THE AARDVARK is published fifteen times a year by Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc., P.O. Box 1674 Station 'C', Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2, including three "Swords of Cerebus" in winter, spring and fall. All contents © 1982 Dave Sim. Any inquiries regarding use of the characters, images, or situations depicted should be addressed to Deni Sim. No unauthorized reproduction allowed except for review or other Journalistic purpose. Advertising rates furnished on request. Printed in Canada by Preney Print and Litho Inc., Windsor, Ontario.

Cerebus the Aardvark

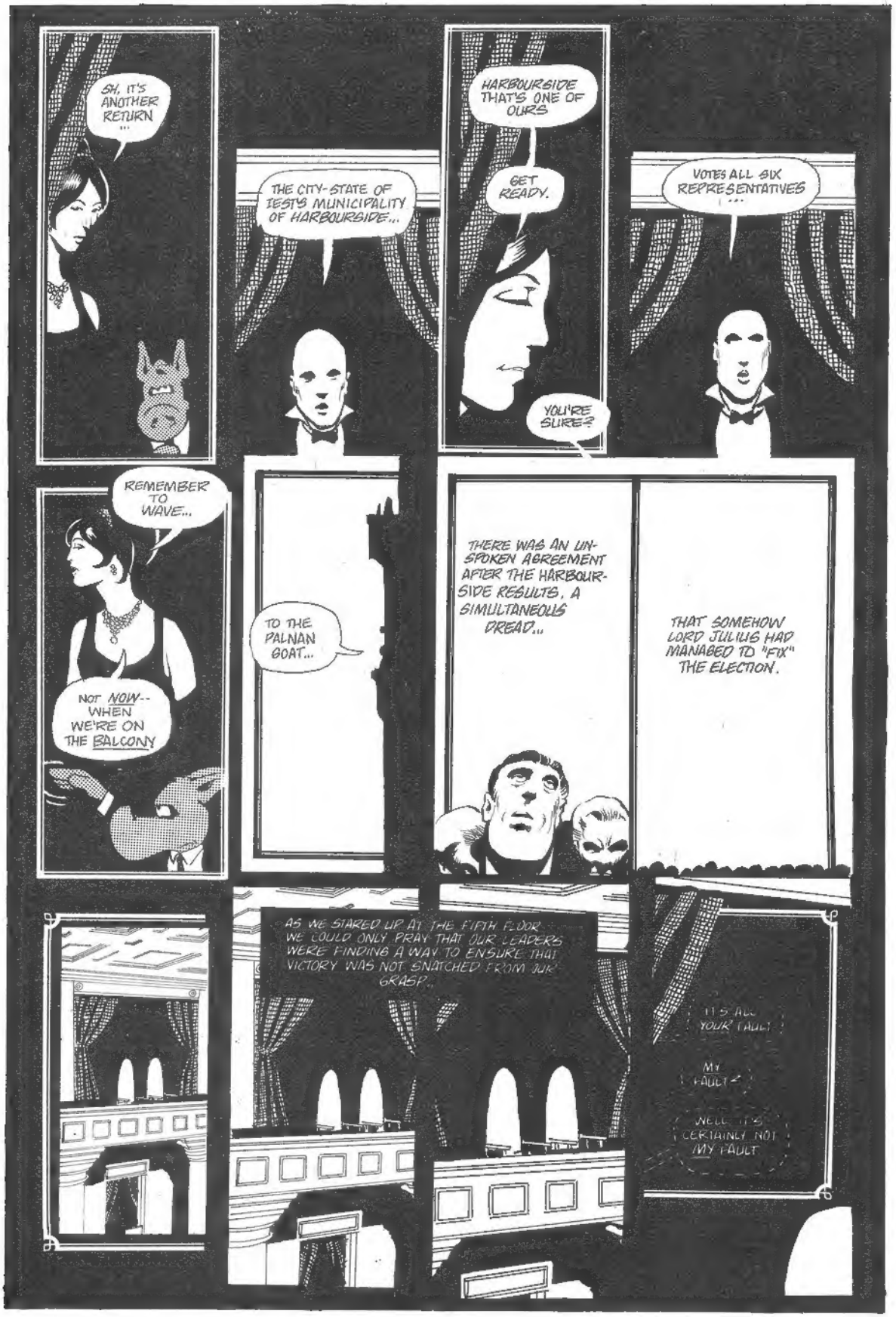
'Election Night
YOU'RE BEING RIDICULOUS.
THAT'S YOUR OPINION.
IT'S THE TRUTH!
MOST OF THOSE PEOPLE OUT THERE ARE MEMBERS OF YOUR OWN PARTY!
THEY'RE THE ONES WHO HANG AROUND THE SALONS, SIPPING WINE WITH THEIR PINKIES OUT AND USING BIG WORDS!!
WHUT'S TH' MATTER?
HE REFUSES TO GO OUT! HE SAYS THEY'RE GOING TO LAUGH AT HIM.
HEH HEH HEH! WHY THET'S TH' STOOPIDEST THANG AH EVER...
WHUT AH MEANT TUH SAY, YER MERCIFULNESS ...
ALL THE GREAT POPULISTS AND REPUBLICANS OF THE AGE WERE GATHERED THAT EVENING -- HAD STREAMED INTO THE HALL SINCE BEFORE DAWN.
AT LAST, THE PARTY SPEAKER WAS HANDED A SLIP OF PAPER
GREATER IEST VOTES ALL EIGHT REPRESENTATIVES TO CEREBUS THE AARDVARK ...
THE TENSION WAS BROKEN BY THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE. THOUGH THE AMBASSADOR BALCONY REMAINED EMPTY, OUR FERVOR WAS UNDIMMED.

WE LAUGHED, SHOUTED, SHOOK EACH OTHER. IT SUDDENLY SEEMED POSSIBLE; SO INSANELY WITHIN REACH!
LISTEN TO THAT!
HOW CAN YOU SAY THEY'LL LAUGH AT YOU?
WHAT IF CEREBUS DOESN'T WIN THE NEXT DISTRICT?!
THEY ADORE YOU!
LET THEM, DAMMIT!
CEREBUS WOULD PREFER THAT THEY ADORE HIM THROUGH THE CURTAIN! THANKS!
SPONTANEOUSLY, WE BEGAN A RHYTHMIC CLAPPING AND A CHANT OF "AARDVARK AARDVARK"
WE FAIRLY GLOWED WITH OPTIMISM.
YOU SEE? YOU SEE?
NOW THEY'RE MAKING FUN OF CEREBUS' SPECIES
WHAT'S WRONG?
HE'S BEING A PERFECT ASS - THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG!
HE THINKS THEY'RE GOING TO LAUGH AT HIM
I'VE TOLD HIM AND I'VE TOLD HIM...
YES.
I'M SURE YOU HAVE.
EXCUSE US FOR A FEW MINUTES.


CEREBUS JUST DOESN'T WANT TO GO OUT THERE!...
I QUITE UNDERSTAND.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT
YOU DO?
OF COURSE ...
YOU ARE THE EARTH-PIG BORN...
AS LESSER BEINGS...
WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL THAT YOU DEIGN TO CONSORT WITH US...
LEST WE DRIVE YOU FROM OUR MIDST...
YEAH.
DAMN RIGHT.
...I BELIEVE, GREAT CEREBUS, THAT THE CITIZENRY WISHES ONLY TO PROVE ITS GRATITUDE BEFORE YOUR MAGNIFICENT PERSON.
YEAH?
WELL, MAYBE JUST A FEW SECONDS, THEN.


BOROUGH OF T'ABATH, BOROUGH OF HARNE, BOROUGH OF MANN, BOROUGH OF KIEL, AND BOROUGH OF MERCER VOTE ONE REPRESENTATIVE EACH TO THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER OF THE CITY-STATE OF IEST ...
...JULIUS GOAT.
FORGET IT! CEREBUS IS NOT GOING OUT THERE!
BUT SURELY
LISTEN, MAC MUFIN, CEREBUS DOES NOT INTEND TO MAKE A FOOL
OF
HIM
DID YOU SEND OUT FOR AN ALBINO?
THOSE PEOPLE ARE WAITING TO SEE SOMEONE IMPORTANT. IF A THEOCRAT WON'T GO OUT THERE
THEN MAYBE I NEED A DEVOTIONALIST.
IT'S LIKE MAH DADDY USED TUH SAY, SON "Y'CAINT HAVE TH' BUTTERFLIES IF Y'AINT GOT THE STOMACH"
GUTS, THAT IS!
Y'ALL JUST PUT Y'THUMB IN Y'MOUTH AN' WHEN AHM ELECTED, AH'LL TRY AN' FIND Y'A JOB AS ONE O' MAH VALETS!
BUT F'R NOW ...
...CUE...
...AH SAY--CUE TH' FANFARE!

WHOA!
WHOOOOOOAA
SON! WHOA, SON! WHAT--I SAY-- WHAT ARE Y'DOING?
VIOLENCE--I SAY--VIOLENCE NEVUH SOLVED ANYTHING, SON!
BUT EVEN AS WE DISCUSSED THE RETURNS FROM LOWER IEST, A TUMBLER WEARING THE CEREMONIAL COSTUME OF THE FALNAN ARISTOCRACY WAS "HURLED" FROM THE BALCONY...
IT WAS A MAGNIFICENT ALLEGORY, OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED TO BUOY OUR SAGGING SPIRITS.
JOYFULLY, WE PASSED THE LIMP FORM OF THE TUMBLER OVER OUR HEADS LIKE PRIMEVAL HUNTERS WHO HAD, AT LAST, CAPTURED A PARTICULARLY WORRISOME BEAST OF PREY.
Y'ALL WOULDN'T HAPPEN T'KNOW WHAR AH COULD FIND TWENTY POUNDS OF PLASTER O'PARIS IN THE SHAPE OF A LEG, WOULD Y'BOY?


SH, IT'S ANOTHER RETURN ...
THE CITY-STATE OF IESTYN'S MUNICIPALITY OF HARBOURSIDE...
HARBOURSIDE THAT'S ONE OF OURS
GET READY.
YOU'RE SURE?
VOTES ALL SIX REPRESENTATIVES ...
REMEMBER TO WAVE...
NOT NOW-- WHEN WE'RE ON THE BALCONY
TO THE PALNAN GOAT...
THERE WAS AN UN-SPOKEN AGREEMENT AFTER THE HARBOUR-SIDE RESULTS, A SIMULTANEOUS DREAD...
THAT SOMEHOW LORD JULIUS HAD MANAGED TO "FIX" THE ELECTION.
AS WE STARED UP AT THE FIFTH FLOOR WE COULD ONLY PRAY THAT OUR LEADERS WERE FINDING A WAY TO ENSURE THAT VICTORY WAS NOT SNATCHED FROM OUR GRASP.
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT
MY FAULT?
WELL IT'S CERTAINLY NOT MY FAULT

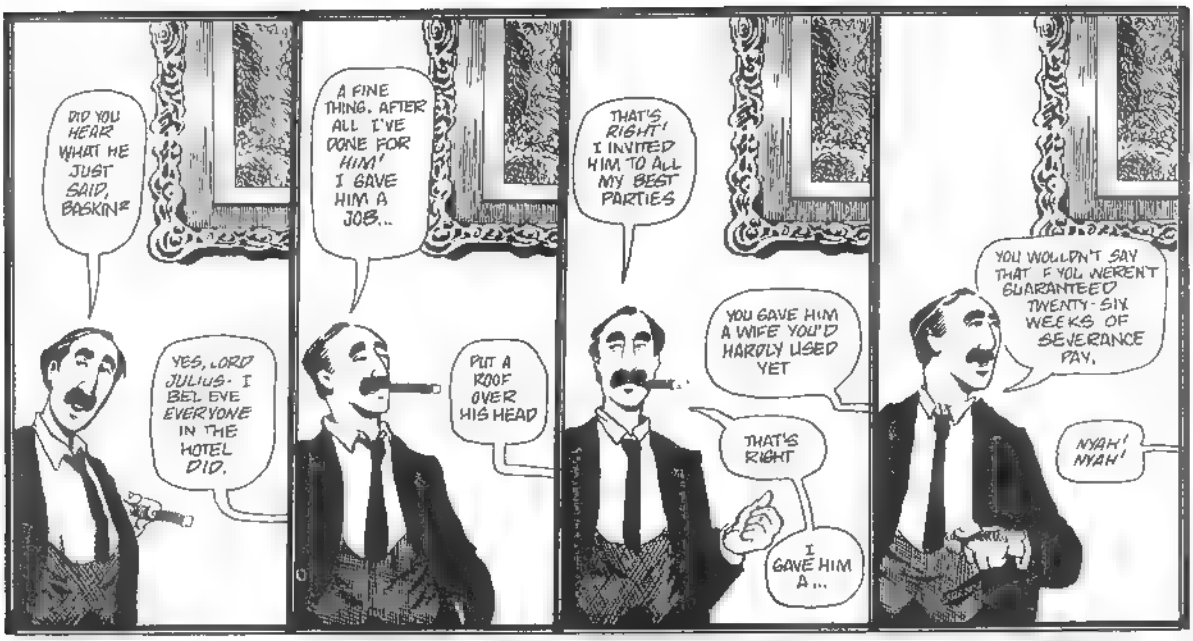
TIME SEEMED TO DRAG ON INTERMINABLY! WITH THE LOSS OF HARBOURSIDE, THE THEOCRATS NOW TRAILED THE DEVOTIONALISTS ELEVEN SEATS TO EIGHT ...
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE TRUSTED ADDISON WHEN HE SAID HE COULD KEEP THE GUILD EXECUTIVE ON BOARD...
IS IT ADDISON'S FAULT? OR DID LORD JULIUS RIG THE RESULTS?
IT'S MY FAULT-- I SHOULD HAVE APPOINTED SOMEONE I COULD TRUST...
CEREBUS HAS ALWAYS SAID THAT YOU'RE ONLY AS GOOD AS THE PEOPLE CARRYING OUT YOUR ORDERS ...
I THOUGHT THAT I COULD...
SHH.
THE CITY-STATE OF IEST'S GARDEN MUNICIPALITY OF OLDHAM...
AH! OLDHAM! I HAD CYRUS BEECHAM RUNNING THINGS FOR US DOWN THERE, M'LORD. GOOD MAN --A VERY GOOD MAN...
AYE?
BIRTHPLACE OF WILLIAM LYON -- INVENTOR OF THE CONTINUOUS ACTION LOOM...
MMM. A REAL MOVER, A TAKE-CHARGE TYPE, LOVES A GOOD CHALLENGE ...
VOTES ALL SIX REPRESENTATIVES ...
...TO THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER OF IEST.
I WAS THINKING OF BRINGING HIM BY FOR A CHAT WHEN WE'RE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO HEAD UP EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.
JULIUS GOAT.

BUT THEN I DECIDED TO FIRE THE INCOMPETENT LITTLE TWIT, INSTEAD.
I SHOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT TOO MUCH IF I WERE YOU, M'LORD.
THE SUBURBAN RIDINGS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN UNPREDICTABLE.
EXCEPT NELSON, OF COURSE ...
I THINK I CAN SAFELY SAY, WITHOUT FEAR OF CONTRADICTION, THAT NELSON WILL GO FOR THE NEW REPUBLICANISM IN A BIG WAY...
WHO'A' YOU KIDDIN'?
NELSON IS A HULLY-OWNED SUBSIDEE-AIRY OF DA PALNOO OVUHLAND TRADIN' COMP'NY.
THAT, SIR, IS A SCANDALOUS SPECULATION ON YOUR PART!!
DAT AIN'T NO SCANDALOUS SPECULATION, MOY FRIEN'-- DAT IS A WELL-KNOWN SECRET ...
A WELL-KNOWN SECRET? OR A WELL-USED BIT OF GOSSIP?
I GOT FIFTY CROWNS SEZ IT'S A WELL-KNOWN SECRET ...
I HAVE ONE HUNDRED CROWNS WHICH SAYS THAT IT IS AN UN-SUBSTANTIATED RUMOUR!!
Bank of Test
THE CITY-STATE OF TEST'S TOWNSHIP OF NELSON...

A HUNNERD N' FIFTY...
VOTES ALL SIX OF ITS REPRESENTATIVES TO THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE FOR PRIME MINISTER ...
TWO HUNDRED
Y R ON!
JULIUS THE GOAT..
NOW EAST CHAPEL -- DERE IS A TOWN DAT IS READY F'YUH NOO RUHPUBLIC'NIZM.
COME, NOW. EAST CHAPEL WOULD NEVER VOTE FOR A REPUBLICAN PARTY. THEY RE STILL LOYAL TO HIS HOLINESS...
"WHEN DA CAT'S AWAY .."
RIDICULOUS NAIVE AND.
F.FTY?
A HUNNERD
YOU ARE ON.
HIS HOLINESS' LOYAL HOLY VILLAGE OF EAST CHAPEL, HOME OF HIS HOLINESS...
WITH FAINT INTEREST AND NO LITTLE DISTASTE, VOTES ITS SINGLE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS...
JULIUS LORD GOAT...

YOU SEE? YOU SEE?
LET THAT BE A LESSON TO YOU ABOUT POLITICAL INSTINCTS, YOU ILLITERATE BUFFOON!
EAST CHAPEL WOULD RATHER HAVE VOTED FOR A DEAD MOLLUSK FOR PRIME MINISTER THAN VOTE FOR C...
"OMEONE ELSE
BUT
UH
BUT THE REAL VILLAIN IS HIM!
HMPH-- IS HE! PRETENDING TO BE A REPUBLICAN, WHEN HE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A BLATANT OPPORTUNIST!
A MONEY-GRUBBING LEECH!
NOW WAIT A MINNIT!
"WAIT A MINUTE" HE SAYS; AS IF A MERE MINUTE WOULD SUFFICE TO STAVE OFF THE CRITICISM HE SO RICHLY DESERVES...
IF HE WOULD DEFEND HIMSELF, THEN LET HIM ANSWER THIS...
WHAT HAS HE EVER DONE TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF REPUBLICANISM?!
THE CITY-STATE OF IEST'S MUNICIPALITIES OF B'ORN, GRACE, DUNHAM AND THE DOCKS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WISHES OF REPRESENTATIVE FILGATE WHOM THEY REVERE MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF, UNANIMOUSLY VOTE ALL TEN REPRESENTATIVES TO THEIR NEXT PRIME MINISTER, CEREBUS THE AARDVARK...

WE WERE NOW TRAILING TWENTY-FOUR SEATS TO EIGHTEEN...
I THINK WE HAD BETTER ASSUME WE ARE GOING TO BE THE OPPOSITION PARTY...
IN CASE LORD JULIUS DECIDES TO ARREST HIS OPPONENTS PERHAPS WE SHOULD LEAVE NOW...
YES YES! RIGHT NOW! I'VE GOT SOME LADS WE CAN SEND IN TO STIR THINGS UP IF HE TRIES TO CONVENE THE LEGISLATURE.
BUT FOR THE MOMENT, WE CAN'T LET HIM ROLL OVER US IN THE HEAT OF VICTORY!
I GOT ENOUGH TROOPS TUH HOLD D'UPPAH CITY IF WE C'N GET D'PEOPLE BEHIND US...
BUT RIGHT NOW WE BETTUH START PACKIN'....
YOU CAN ALL LEAVE IF YOU WANT TO BUT CEREBUS IS STAYING RIGHT HERE!
WE ALL FELT BITTERLY DISAPPOINTED. NOT A SINGLE SEAT IN ANY PROVINCE... EXCEPT THE DOCKS.
THE DOCKS.
THE QUIET INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTION WE HAD DREAMED OF, WAS NOW A BAD JOKE...
EVERY TIME HIS MUSTACHE TWITCHES, YOU ALL RUN FOR THE HILLS!
WELL, NOT CEREBUS THE AARDVARK
IF CEREBUS DOESN'T BEAT HIM IN THE ELECTION
CEREBUS WILL BEAT HIM IN A WAR!!
I SHALL NEVER FORGET THAT MOMENT OF EXULTATION, AS IF CHEERED AND APPLAUDED BY
IN THE NAME OF
AND
NO COULD ASK FOR A NOBLER DEATH


DID YOU HEAR WHAT HE JUST SAID, BASKIN?
YES, LORD JULIUS. I BELIEVE EVERYONE IN THE HOTEL DID.
A FINE THING. AFTER ALL I'VE DONE FOR HIM! I GAVE HIM A JOB...
PUT A ROOF OVER HIS HEAD
THAT'S RIGHT! I INVITED HIM TO ALL MY BEST PARTIES
YOU GAVE HIM A WIFE YOU'D HARDLY USED YET
THAT'S RIGHT
I GAVE HIM A...
YOU WOULDN'T SAY THAT IF YOU WEREN'T GUARANTEED TWENTY-SIX WEEKS OF SEVERANCE PAY.
NYAH! NYAH!

FLEAGLE-- BET SOME THUGS FROM THE TAVERN EIGHT BLOCKS DOWN, TWENTY OR SO. GIVE THEM A HALF-CROWN EACH AND TELL THEM TO HOLD THIS SUITE OF ROOMS AT ALL COSTS..
YES, VER ASSERTIVENESS.
BRAN --TAKE A CARRIAGE AND FIND ME TWO DIVISIONS OF HEAVY PIKE ON THE BLACK MARKET
SPLIT THEM AND STATION THEM AT EACH ENTRY POINT TO THE REGENCY GROUNDS
YES, GREAT CEREBUS..
TELL THEM THEY'LL BE FACING PALWAN CROSSBOWMEN AND SKIRMISH TROOPS ...
NORTHBELL, THE BREADBASKET OF THE CITY-STATE OF IEST...
VOTES: TWO REPRESENTATIVES TO LORD JULIUS GOAT AND TWO REPRESENTATIVES TO CEREBUS
WHAT DOES THAT GIVE US?
WE HAVE TWENTY SEATS. THEY HAVE TWENTY-SIX... THEY'RE FAST THE HALFWAY POINT FOR A MAJORITY
NINE RIDINGS STILL TO BE HEARD FROM

HER REVERENCE, THE ABBESS OF ALL GRACE PROVINCE EXTENDS GREETINGS TO ALL FREE PEOPLE ...
QUIT SHOVING!
CEREBUS WAS HERE FIRST!
...AND APPOINTS FIVE REPRESENTATIVES TO CEREBUS AND TEN TO LORD JULIUS' GOAT...
WHAT DOES THAT GIVE US?
THIRTY SIX SEATS, LORD JULIUS
THIRTY SIX TO TWENTY-FIVE..
THEY'RE PAST THE TWO THIRDS MARK
MARK MY WORDS, BASKIN MY BOY -- THE WAY TO AN ABBESS' HEART IS THROUGH HER WARTS...
THE RIVERSIDE PROVINCE OF RIVERSHIRE ...
VOTES BOTH REPRESENTATIVES TO JULIUS, LORD OF GOATS...
DID YOU BRING THE CONFETTI?
YES, LORD JULIUS.
AND THE NOISE-MAKERS?
YES, LORD JULIUS.
WE MAY HAVE TO CONSIDER ARMED REBELLION.
CEREBUS THOUGHT OF THAT...
NO DANCING GIRLS? WHAT IS THIS? SOME KIND OF JOKE?
THEY GOT SNOWED IN IN THE LOWER CITY, LORD JULIUS.
THE TWO DIVISIONS OF PIKE ARE IN PLACE AS YOU ORDERED, GREAT CEREBUS.
SEVEN RIDINGS STILL TO REPORT ...

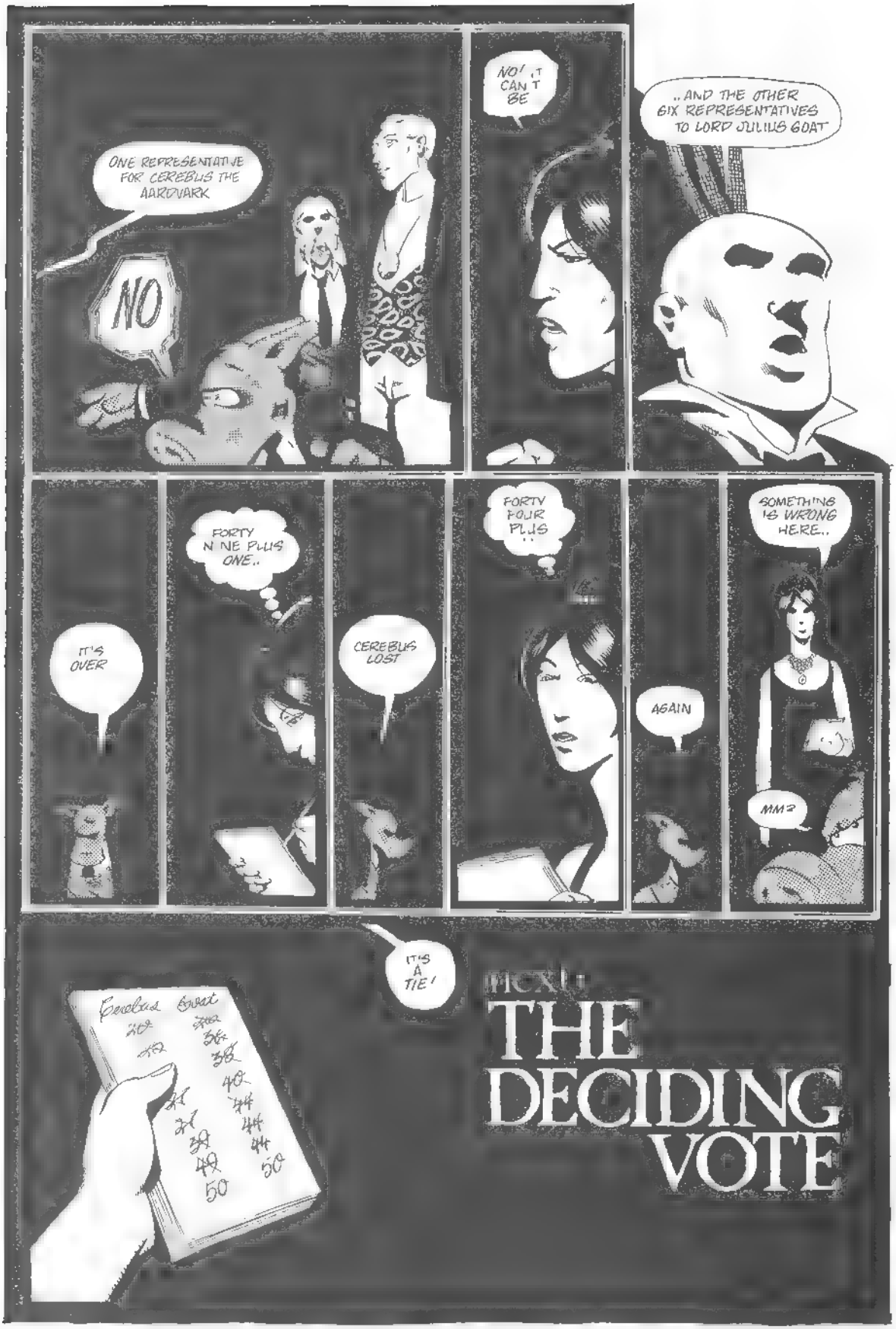
GOPHER FLEAGLE REPORTING IN...
YER THUGS'RE IN PLACE AT ALL THREE DOORS, YER POWERFULNESS
NO ONE GETS IN UNLESS CEREBUS, ASTORIA OR BRAN MAK MUFIN CLEARS THEM
YESSIR!
AS THE DESK CLERK, I MUST PROTEST THE UNCALLED-FOR INFLUX OF RIFF-RAFF... FURTHERMORE..
SOMEBODY DITCH THE WIND-BAG!
SORRY, YER OBNOXIOUSNESS, BUT ORDERS IS ORDERS..
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!
SEE HERE!
IT WAS A TUMBLER DRESSED AS THE REGENCY DESK CLERK... ONCE MORE WE ROARED OUR APPROVAL -- NO ONE WAS GOING TO INTIMIDATE THE THEOCRATS...
LORD JULIUS! LORD JULIUS!
THE THEOCRATS HAVE THE GROUNDS SURROUNDED BY HEAVY PIKE!
WE'LL HAVE TO SEND IN OUR HEAVY PIKE, THEN...
WE CAN'T LORD JULIUS
AND WHY NOT?
YOU TOLD ME TO SELL THEM ON THE BLACK MARKET TO FINANCE YOUR CAMPAIGN.
OH! SO NOW IT'S MY FAULT IS IT?
T'ANA AND DISTRICT, IEST'S GOLDEN PROVINCE OF THE NORTH...
VOTES TWO REPRESENTATIVES TO CEREBUS AND TWO REPRESENTATIVES TO LORD GOAT OF PALNU.
FORTY TO TWENTY-SEVEN...
SIX RIDINGS LEFT

BRAN?
YES, GREAT CEREBUS?
UNTIL WE KNOW FOR CERTAIN HOW LARGE JULIUS' PERSONAL PROTECTION FORCE IS, WE SHOULD BE REINFORCED UP HERE..
GET SOME PIKEMEN UP HERE TO GUARD THE STAIRWELLS ..
RIGHT AWAY, GREAT CEREBUS
WELL, WHAT ABOUT THOSE TWO TALL GUYS WITH THE BIG SPEARS WHO WERE WALKING IN FRONT OF ME WHEN WE GOT HERE?
YOU TOLD ME TO TRADE THEM FOR THE SILVER AND GOLD BATHTUB IN THE SHAPE OF A GIANT SQUID.
WELL, IT CERTAINLY SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING I'D DO..
FORT CLEESE AND FORT TORY, HAVING BEEN CONVINCED FOR SOME TIME NOW THAT THIS STOMACH-TURNING FARCE OF A PIMPLE ON HISTORY'S BACKSIDE IS AN AFFRONT TO ANYONE IN THIS CITY-STATE WITH HALF THE INTELLIGENCE OF A SMALL FURRY ANIMAL BURROWING IN IT'S OWN FILTH..
GET COMFORTABLE ..
THEY'RE A LONG-WINDED BUNCH IN FARMOOR ...
YOU MEAN I HAVEN'T GOT ANY SOLDIERS AT ALL!?
THERE IS THE HONOUR GUARD ..
BUT THEY ONLY HAVE WOODEN SWORDS
TELL THEM TO WHITTLE THEM TO A POINT
YES, LORD JULIUS
ON SECOND THOUGHT, BREAK THE ENDS RIGHT OFF
AND TELL THEM I WANT NO FOE TO BE LEFT WITHOUT A SPLINTER...

AND INSOFAR AS WE FEEL COMPELLED TO MAINTAIN, IF ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF ILLUSION, SOME SEMBLANCE OF, AND I USE THE TERM INCAUTIOUSLY, RESPONSIBLE CENTRAL AUTHORITY IN THE FACE OF THIS ILL-FATED INTRODUCTION OF REPRESENTATIONAL POPULARITY CONTESTS AS OUR MEANS OF GOVERNMENT SELECTION
...IT'S ALL ONE SENTENCE..
CEREBUS USUALLY PASSES THE TIME COUNTING ADVERBS
TRIFLE WITH ME, WILL HE?
I'M SORRY, LORD JULIUS THE HONOUR GUARD TRADED THEIR WOODEN SWORDS FOR HOT LUNCHES..
BUT THEY HAVE MANAGED TO ROUND UP A FEW BUTTER KNIVES.
AH! GOOD
FOR A MINUTE THERE I WAS AFRAID THIS WAS GOING TO BE TOO ONE-SIDED...
THEREFORE, FORT CLEESE AND FORT TORY HAVE NO RECOURSE BUT TO LOWER THEMSELVES TO THE SAME DISGUSTING DEPTHS OF DEPRAVITY AS EVERYONE ELSE IN THIS SNIVELLING AND DEMENTED HALF-WIT OF A THEOCRACY, AND SO ANNOUNCE BEFORE THIS DEPRAVED COMPANY OF VILE REPUBLICANISM THEIR INTENTION TO VOTE ALL FOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO THE STUPID BLEEDING GOAT ...
A GREAT VICTORY! THE TIDE IS TURNING! TO ARMS! TO ARMS!
I'M VERY SORRY, LORD JULIUS, BUT THIS IS ALL THE BOILING OIL THE KITCHEN COULD SPARE ...
...THEY'RE DEEP-FRYING CHICKEN BREASTS THIS EVENING.
REMEMBER MEN!...
...DON'T CHARGE 'TIL YOU SEE THE "MADE IN PALNU" STAMP ON THEIR TUNICS...
FORTY-FOUR SEATS TO TWENTY-SEVEN NOW
THEY ONLY NEED SEVEN MORE FOR A MAJORITY ...
FOUR RIDINGS LEFT...
ACCORDING TO OUR BEST INFORMATION, LORD JULIUS HAS AN ELITE HONOUR GUARD, A NEW DEVICE THAT SHOOTS STREAMS OF BOILING OIL AND SOME KIND OF A SECRET WEAPON ...
HE CALLS IT "THE HUMAN TORCH"
NO! DADDY! PLEASE!
AND HE THROWS FIREBALLS WITH EITHER HAND!!
KEROSENE

THE PROVINCE OF BLAKELY, BIRTHPLACE AND NAMESAKE OF THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF IEST, WITH UTMOST GRATITUDE TO THE FIRST BLAKELY'S DESCENDANT, CYRUS N BLAKELY, VOTES ALL TWELVE REPRESENTATIVES TO CEREBUS ...
OUR CLAPPING AND STAMPING GAINED NEW LIFE AND ENERGY...
HUNH! I WOULD RADDUH BE RE-VERED MORE DAN LIFE ITSELF DAN HAVE A BUNCHA UTMOST GRATUHTOOD...
OF COURSE YOU WOULD...
I DARESAY THAT'S WHY YOU KEEP GETTING RE-ELECTED.
IF I LIVED IN THE DOCKS I WOULD PROBABLY REVERE ANYTHING MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF..
FORTY-FOUR SEATS TO THIRTY-NINE ...
THREE RIDINGS LEFT
IF WE MANAGE TO GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE REMIND ME TO TAKE BLAKELY'S NAME OFF OF THE INVITATION LIST FOR THE FESTIVAL OF PETUNIAS ..
YES, LORD JULIUS.
WHICH THREE?
CHESMI, GARRISON AND..
AARD-VARK! AARD-VARK!
AND..
THAT'S ODD...
CHESMI, GARRISON AND...
AND.
AND WHAT?!
AND .
CHEE. DIS IS EXCOTTING.

THE ANCIENT NORTHERN PROVINCE OF OLDCASTLE, IN THIS ELECTION OF FOURTEEN-THIRTEEN
OH RIGHT! OLDCASTLE
WITH LORD WHAT'S-HIS-NAME
LORD ROONEY
VOTES ALL TEN OF ITS ABLE REPRESENTATIVES
TO THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER OF IEST...
CEREBUS THE AARDVARK AND
REMIND ME TO OFFER LORD WHAT'S-HIS-NAME A JOB.
YOU ALREADY DID-- HE'S GOING TO BE IN YOUR CABINET
OR CEREBUS' SHADOW CABINET
LORD JULIUS! YOU CAN'T GIVE UP NOW!
I'M NOT GIVING UP, I'M JUST GOING TO JUMP OUT THIS WINDOW FOR A MINUTE...
THEY STILL NEED TWO REPRESENTATIVES
WE ONLY NEED TWO OF THE REMAINING SEVEN SEATS
TWO SEATS.
THE PROVINCE OF GARRISON..
THIS IS IT.
SITE OF THE BATTLE OF IEST AND THE CHESMI RIVER REBELLION...
C'MON! SKIP THE HISTORY LESSON
VOTES ITS SEVEN REPRESENTATIVES AS FOLLOWS...


ONE REPRESENTATIVE FOR CEREBUS THE AARDVARK
NO
NO! IT CAN'T BE
..AND THE OTHER SIX REPRESENTATIVES TO LORD JULIUS GOAT
IT'S OVER
FORTY NINE PLUS ONE..
CEREBUS LOST
FORTY FOUR PLUS ..
AGAIN
SOMETHING IS WRONG HERE..
MM?
IT'S A TIE!
Cerebus
Goat
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36
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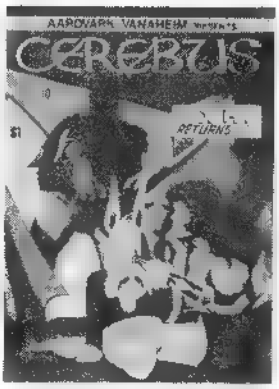

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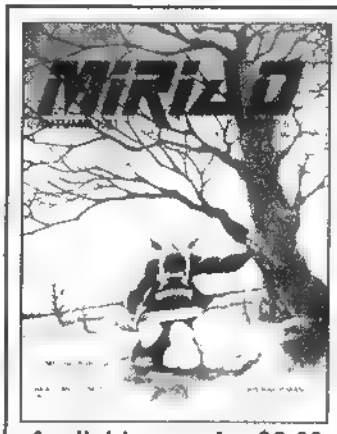

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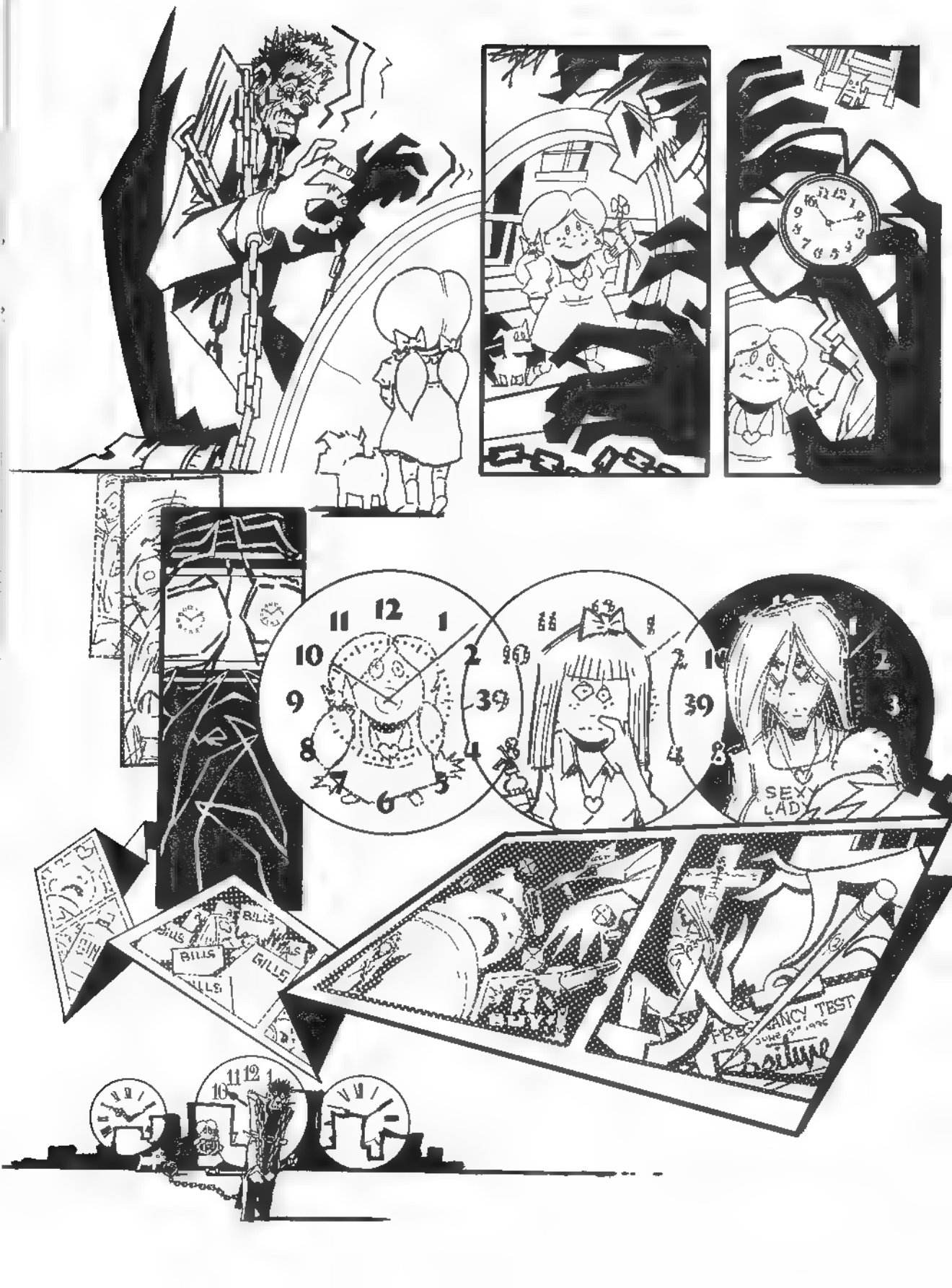
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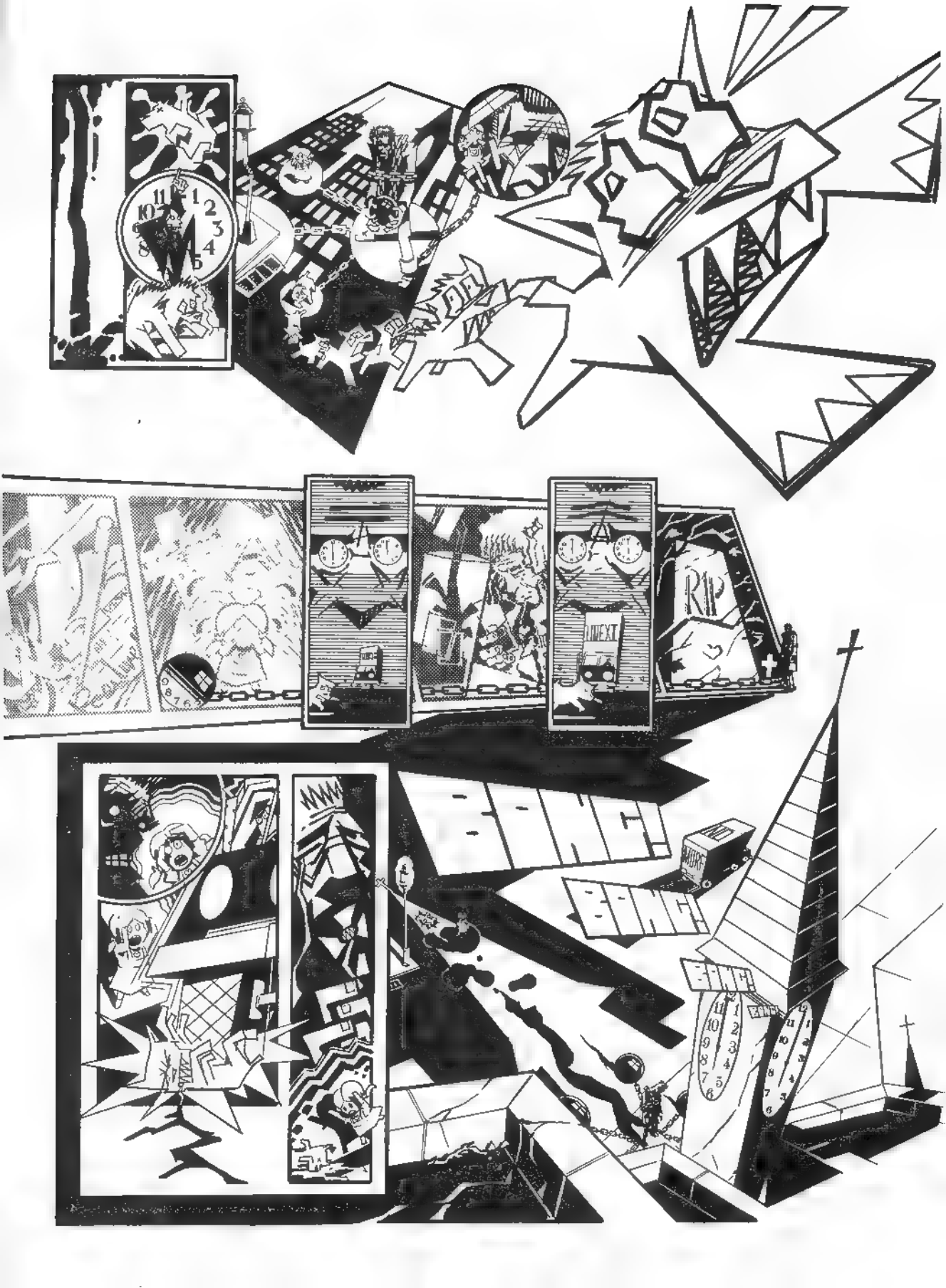
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Do you count the days until each issue comes out?
Then why haven't you joined the Friends of Cerebus Club?

This is what you will get:

INTERVIEWS

THE UNIVERSAL AARDVARK

Glenn Lisle interviews Dave Sim

Dave Sim, creator of the remarkable CEREBUS, manages to keep a low profile even at conventions where he's a featured guest. So it was at MAPLECON III in Ottawa, Canada, last October (1980). In fact, we scoured the dealer rooms and panel audiences for over two hours trying to locate him for our talk.

"Can we go somewhere quieter?" I inquired the tape recorder.

"I thought you'd never ask." He mumbled Groucho Marx. Grinning a broad, word-game-winner's grin he led me to a deserted lobby where, during regular hours, the elevators stop on the Mezzanine floor of the Chateau Laurier Hotel, Ottawa's real life answer to Disney's Sleeping Beauty's Castle. We sat on the floor.

Where was CEREBUS born?

"That's privileged information, if you mean where the character came from."

UNPUBLISHED DAVE SIM ART

JANUARY 28TH DESIGN 1979

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CEREBUS fan art gallery

and much more ! ! !

Here's just a sample of last year's "goodies".

- Membership certificate
- "Fight Like an Aardvark" bumper sticker
- "Friends of Cerebus" lapel sticker
- Wallet-sized membership card

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave and Deni

Is there any chance of coming to Michigan on your tour?

I live in Lansing, Michigan Cerebus sells well here We have two comic shops - the Book Exchange and Curious Books I would like to meet you get my #1 validated and see if Deni looks like the Regency Elf. (S.gh!)

By the way when I do meet you - Do you get tired of the compliments and praise? Or should I have a smug Cerebus look as if saying, "They're lucky I read the thing"? This is my first letter to you I'll be writing more Cerebus brings a lot of joy to me and I feel I should share that with you

P S You are doing a big service with Unique Stories Neil the Horse is the best yet, please more Neil

Ron Langs
731 W Genesee
Lansing, MI , 48915

We will probably be in Michigan on a "Great Lakes" tour at some future date. More Neil is on the way

Dear Dave,

I don t see where the criticisms of "High Society" are at all valid For one thing, people seem to be viewing it as horrible inconsistency instead of brilliant innovation It is not breaking character but *developing* it, and character development and maturity occur only as new situations arise and experience is gained by dealing with them Secondly, this aids the artist who, without the introduction of novelty and the exercise of imagination, will go batty from tedium and find his artwork stunted and stagnant.

No sentient being in any world real or comic, can develop through endless repetition not only is variety the spice of life but the main ingredient of verisimilitude In "High Society", Cerebus not only matures, but learns lessons that will be an integral component of the decisions he makes in future adventures In no way can that be wrong - only the thinking that considers it so

Liz Calhoun
1805 Nebraska
Flint, MI , 48506

Don't she write good? You write real good, lady I wish I could write like that Cheee. Seriously, Liz, thank you for the kind words

Dave & Den

"Campaign" inspired the enclosed illo

I kept the drawing purposely *stark* and *simple*, as I wanted it to convey a bit of power, with the white of the symbolic "votes" contrasting with the black of the background

Whether I succeeded or not, I'll leave up to you

John A Wilcox
40 Hales Court
Westport, CT., 06880

John (give me an "A") Wilcox offers an early prediction on the election's outcome edging out the CBS computer by well over a month and a half

Dear Dave and Den

We seem to be two-thirds of the way through "High Society now and I'm enjoy ng it thoroughly I have no idea how it's all going to turn out, and I don t really care to know before the fact, but there s one question that keeps plaguing me what about the duck? You know, the damn stachoo of a damn duck that Dirty

CEREBUS ORIGINAL ART

I am now offering pages of Cerebus for sale at $100 00 per page Payment is in U S currency for rich Americans $110 00 Canadian per page for victims of Allan MacEachen's budget I have issue 30 to the present complete I am not selling certain pages (all of # 36 for example) I want to sell a few pages a month so if they start moving too fast the price goes up The pages will be mailed to you after I draw each issue (generally the first of the month) or allow four weeks for delivery if you want to get formal about it Certified cheques or money orders only, payable to Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc at the address above Please list as many alternatives as you can Sorry, I don't have time to send out lists of whats sold and what isn t There is no discount for quantity, so please don t ask

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Fleagle sold tuh Big Garn tuh buy some saddle-sore remedy? Yeah, that duck Dirty Fleagle mentioned it in #39, but we still have no idea how it fits into Sim s Master Plan Uh - it *does* fit in, doesn't it Dave? I'd hate to have been wa ting a whole year (and more) for naught

Nevertheless, I'm anticipating great stuff in the next ten issues and am looking forward to meeting both of you this October the 14th (assuming I can find a damn job in this damn town, that is)

P S Dave's "Tilting" plate for the F O O G portfolio was very, very nice

Alan Stewart
2883 Briarcliff Rd N E
Atlanta, GA

By the time you read this, thanks to the miracle of time-lapse publishing, I will already have met Alan and left again.

Dear Dave Sim

Contrary to popular rumor, I am not a good-looking 34 year old, divorced professional male "verging on an incipient mid-life crisis", but a smartmouthed 24 year old girl in an obstinately-prolonged adolescence It's a mistake anyone could have made, but there the similarit es end I'm a raging Bohemian, have never been married and sport a wart on the end of my nose

Lest the feminists feel slighted I referred to myself as a 'girl" because I have yet to meet 'men" and 'women" Everyone seems to pretend he/she is grown-up all the while hoping that the real adults, (whoever the hell they are), don't catch on

P S Or am I just cashing in on the fact that it's 'in' to be 24 and female?

P P S Zairbuss 4-ever!

Micky DuPree
41 Burnside #2
Somerville MA, 02144

Dear Dave and Company

Ah *This* is more my kind of Cerebus Economics confuse me Page 2 is the best campaign speech I've ever read and/or seen Bran MacMufin isn't *really* a military strategical genius, is he? Oho

More of Lord Julius! More! More!

Why doesn't the regency elf have pointed ears? Everybody else does

Unt I Cerebus finds his bellybutton -------

P S Micky DuPree is a little old man I've known her -- er, him -- ever since high school

Dian Hardison
LT USN
Norfolk VA

Anyone else want to guess what or who Micky DuPree is?

Dear Dave and Deni

Nothing much has been happening in this end of town recently so I decided I'd write this much-overdo letter before I climb the walls (It's been real easy to pull that stunt ever since I was bitten by this spider at a physics demonstration) Cerebus has been fantastic lately (!!!) and I'm *sure* it's gonna keep getting better! Issue #39 had me gurgling in fits of idiocy during my perusal of its pages, (laughing that is) and everyone around me begun to eye me strangely #40 kept right on going where #39 left off

In #39 Dave asked if and where he had lost people within his story lines Well, the only time I experienced "What the hell is going on here?" was after I read #28, the first issue of Cerebus I ever read This didn't stop me though, I always give a comic a fair chance So, needless to say, after I read more of this guy's stories and acquired some back issues, #28 made far more sense Very complex society this aardvark lives in, n'est-ce pas?

Finally, I thought I'd tell you that I fully support you in your quest to keep the book under *your* control instead of following *everybody's* requests for Cerebus to do this or Cerebus do that. You appear to be doing just fine as it is and I'm sure you have an outline for Cerebus' future that should keep most fans happy Cerebus is the best comic around, keep it that way!!!

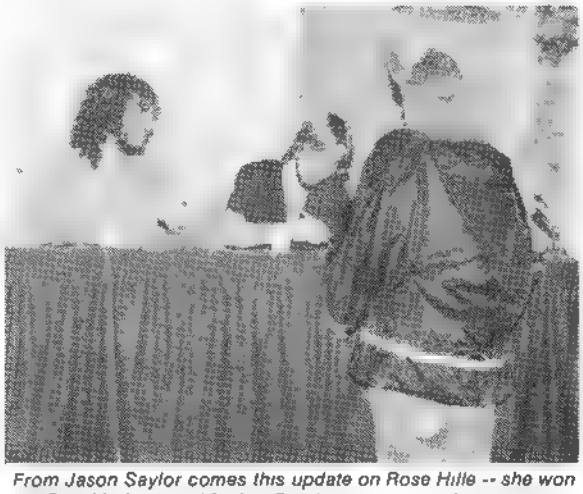
Ross Johnston
82 Spalding Drive
Hamilton, Ontario
L9B 1H3

There are people who would never believe *someone would buy Cerebus again if number 28 was the first one someone bought. There's a good sentence in there somewhere, believe me*

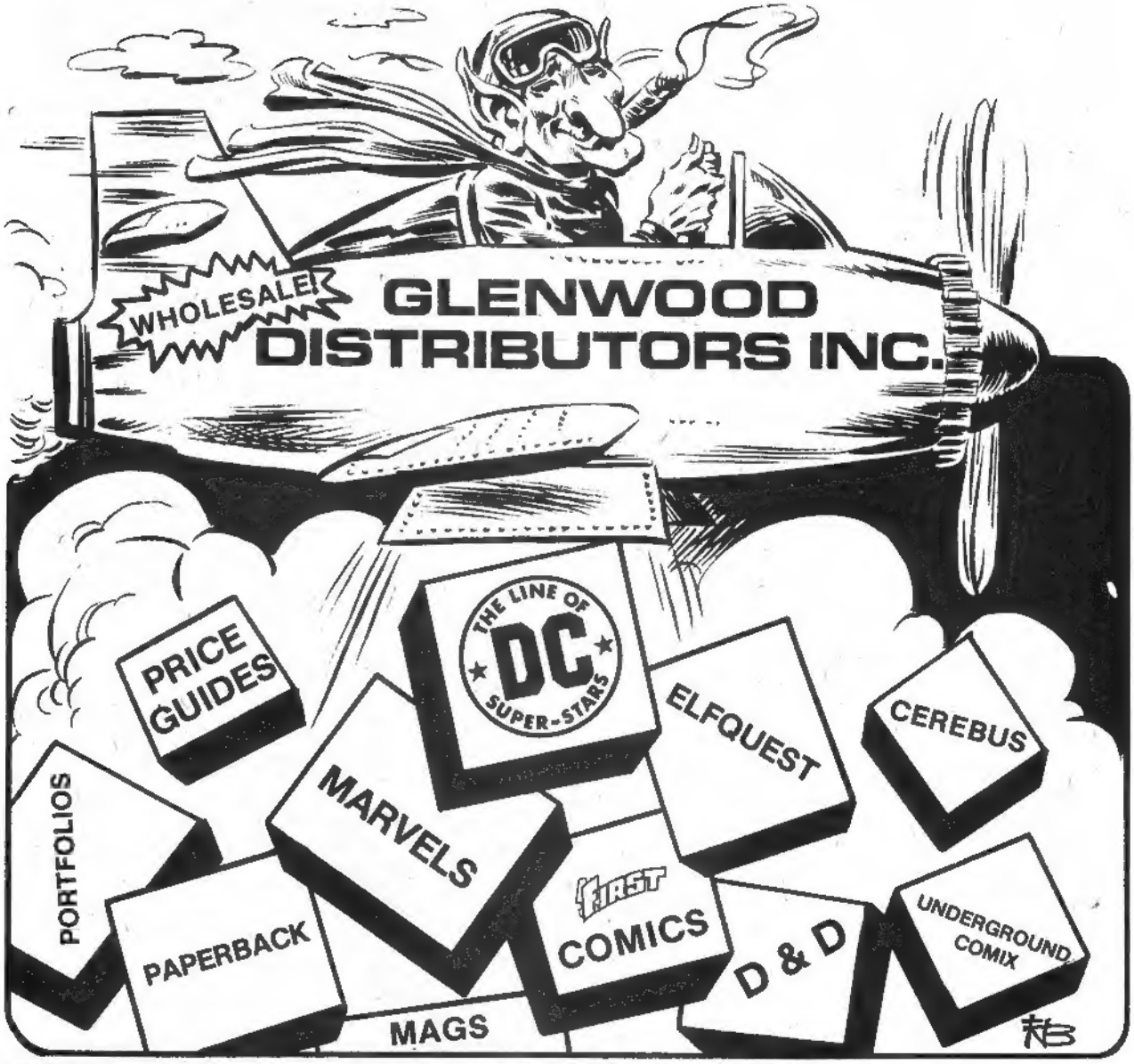
Dear Dave & Deni

Enclosed you will find ANOTHER picture of Cerebus, this time from the Chicago Comicon. The person inside the costume is Rose Hille, and was from my camera. I'm sorry it took so long to get it to you, but I had to show it off some Hope you like it, and maybe I'll have another picture in your letter column

Terry O'Brien
3911 Stanton,
Fort Wayne, IND, 46815



From Jason Saylor comes this update on Rose Hille -- she won the Best Media award for her Cerebus costume at Inconjunction in Indianapolis Here she is getting an autograph at the Chicago Con in July. The chap on my right, winking at Cat Yronwode, is Eclipse Publisher, Dean Mullaney



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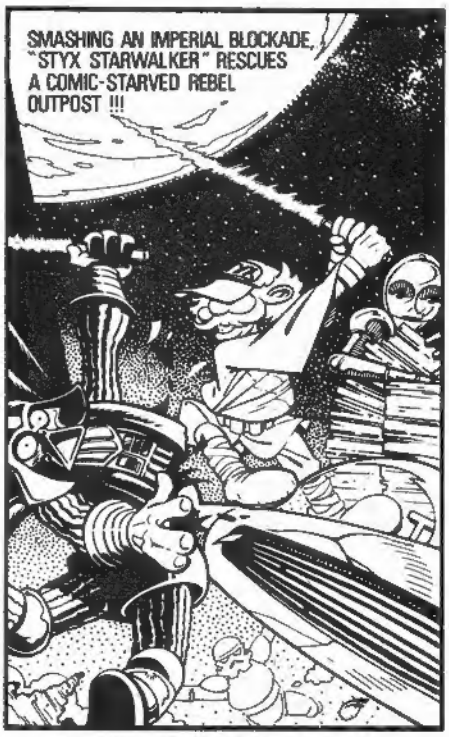

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I DON'T HAVE A WIFE OR CHILD LIKE JIM, BUT MY MOM HERE NEEDS PLASTIC SURGERY!
AND I'M GOING TO NEED BRACES AS SOON AS I GET TEETH.
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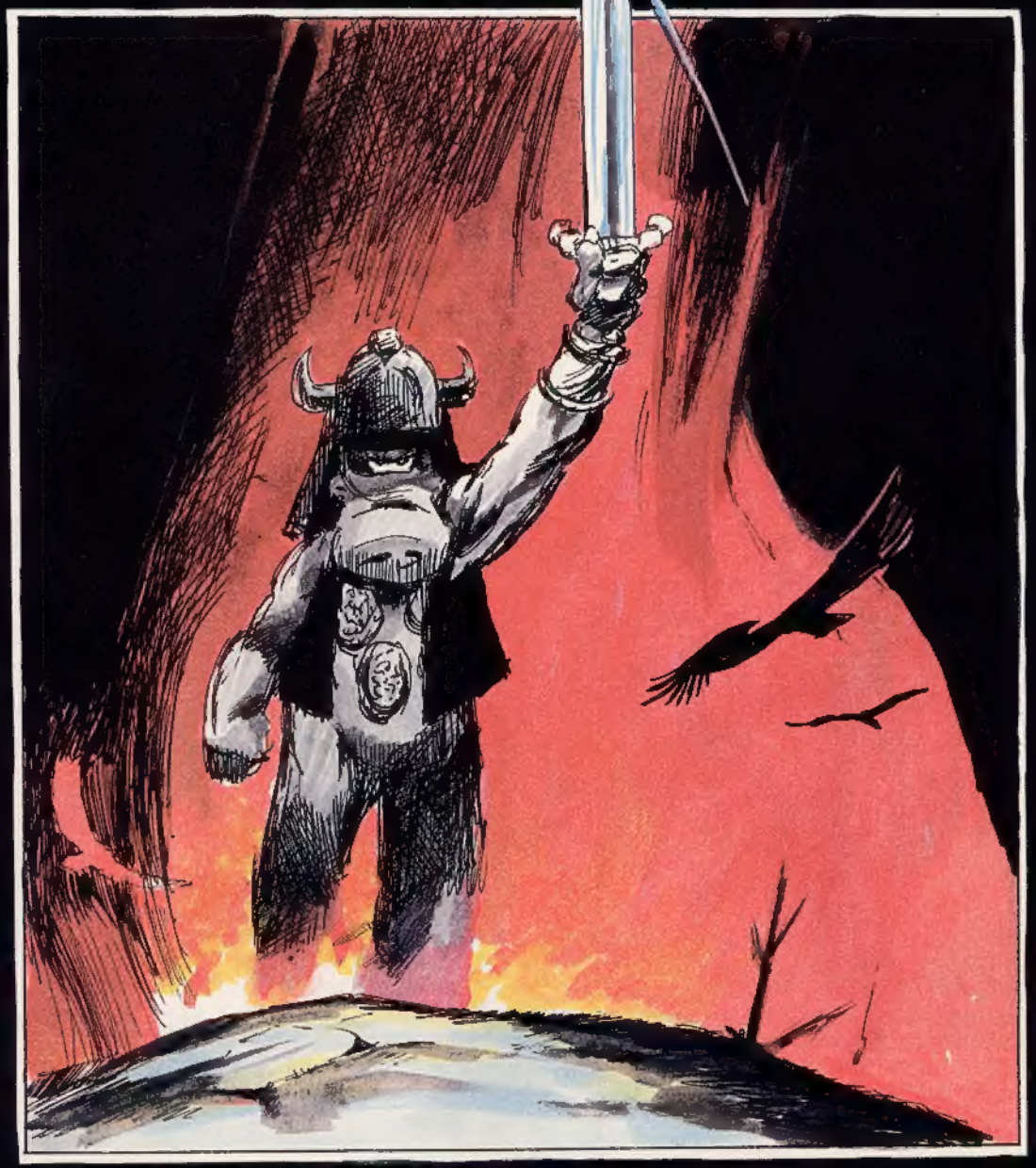

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THE AARDVARK

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